

Rational Pharmaceutical Management Plus Workshops on TB Pharmaceutical Management Tbilisi, Georgia June 19-23, 2006: Trip Report

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About RPM Plus

RPM Plus works in more than 20 developing and transitional countries to provide technical assistance to strengthen drug and health commodity management systems. The program offers technical guidance and assists in strategy development and program implementation both in improving the availability of health commodities—pharmaceuticals, vaccines, supplies, and basic medical equipment—of assured quality for maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS, infectious diseases, and family planning and in promoting the appropriate use of health commodities in the public and private sectors.

Abstract

A regular supply of TB medicines is one of the main components of the DOTS and DOTS Plus schemes. RPM Plus contributes to these schemes through facilitation of training workshops in collaboration with regional and local TB partners. In July 2006 RPM Plus participated in two activities for pharmaceutical management of tuberculosis in Tbilisi, Georgia in collaboration with GOPA/German Development Cooperating Agency. The first workshop discussed assessment findings from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The second workshop trained district TB coordinators on the elements of good TB pharmaceutical management.

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Key Words

Tuberculosis, TB, pharmaceutical management, FDC, MDR-TB, DOTS, DOTS Plus, pharmaceutical sector assessment

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CONTENTS

Contents	iii
Acronyms	v
Background	1
Purpose of Trip	1
Scope of Work	2
Activities	3
Collaborators and Partners	4
Next Steps	5
Annex 1. Participant list.....	7
Annex 2. Participant list.....	9
Annex 3. Participant Evaluation	11

ACRONYMS

DOTS	WHO scheme for controlling TB in national programs
DOTS Plus	Projects to control multi-drug resistant TB which are built on a good DOTS scheme
FDC	Fixed dose combination products
GLC	Green Light Committee
GOPA	German Technical Development Cooperation/Consulting Agency
MDR-TB	Multi-drug resistant tuberculosis
TB	Tuberculosis
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

BACKGROUND

With the rate of tuberculosis (TB) cases continuing to surge in many developing countries, the need for good pharmaceutical management becomes evident since the WHO schemes, DOTS and DOTS Plus for promoting national TB control demand an uninterrupted supply of quality TB medicines and supplies. Developing countries often lack technical resources to put effective pharmaceutical systems in place.

WHO and other TB partners promote training workshops in national TB control. RPM Plus contributes to the global TB control effort by providing practical training during such workshops in TB pharmaceutical management.

At regional and local levels RPM Plus also provides technical training in target areas and for the past two years has worked with the TB programs of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan of the Caucasus region to develop appropriate TB pharmaceutical management systems. Following a week long workshop in July 2004, it became evident that an assessment of the systems in the three Caucasus countries was needed.

Along side its local TB partner GOPA (German Development Consulting Agency), RPM Plus developed a plan to train target personnel from the pharmaceutical and TB programs in the quick assessment technology developed by RPM Plus using the *Pharmaceutical Management for Tuberculosis (PMTB) Assessment Manual* as the basis. The workshop was carried out in Russian in Tbilisi, Georgia from July 12-15, 2005.

Each of the three countries carried out the assessments in 2005/2006 and reported the results during the final workshop held in Tbilisi, Georgia on 19-20 July 2006.

In February 2006, RPM Plus received a request from the GFATM/Georgia TB program to conduct training on TB drug management for Georgian district TB coordinators. It was agreed that this training will be conducted immediately after the regional workshop described above.

The workshop activities, outcomes and next steps are described in the report below. The assessment workshop was co-funded by USAID through the RPM Plus program (USAID/ENE funding) and GOPA. The GFATM/Georgia program covered expenses of participants, and costs of venue and training materials. RPM Plus facilitated the training with existing funds from USAID/E&E.

Thomas Moore and Andrey Zagorskiy were facilitators for both workshops in Tbilisi.

Purpose of Trip

- Strengthen TB drug management of NTPs in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan
- Strengthen TB drug distribution and reporting management of TB district coordinators (Georgia only)

Scope of Work

The Scope of Work is as follows:

1. Conduct a regional follow-up workshop for NTP managers of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan
2. Conduct training on Pharmaceutical Management for TB for district TB coordinators (Georgia only)
3. Brief/debrief USAID/Georgia officials, upon request

ACTIVITIES

1. Conduct a regional follow-up workshop for NTP managers of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan

Three participants from each of the three countries - a pharmacist, a TB program doctor and the GOPA representative – attended the workshop, amounting to a total of nine participants in all. Each of the three representatives were responsible for the TB pharmaceutical management system assessment in their respective countries. See Annex 1.

The workshop consisted of the following activities:

- Review of the Pharmaceutical Management for TB (PMTB) Assessment process
- Open discussion of experiences gained while carrying out the PMTB assessments
- Each country team calculated indicators from data collected in their programs
- Where appropriate participants worked with their data to further stratify each indicator according to level of health care or type of health facility
- Each country presented indicator results in plenary
- An open discussion was held for each country's indicators helping team members identify weaknesses or gaps in good TB pharmaceutical management
- Each team prepared a country improvement plan based on the assessment findings and presented them in plenary
- An open discussion of improvement plans ensued and plans were changed accordingly
- Each team prepared Power Point slides for later presentations at the MoH, GFATM committee and other partners to gain support for their identified weaknesses in TB pharmaceutical management; focus was made on the indicator data as evidence of the findings
- Each country team had prepared a draft report of the assessment experience prior to the workshop; these were finalized during the workshop based on work carried out during the two days
- Facilitators and country teams discussed how and where the final assessment reports could be disseminated as evidence for the needed improvements they identified during the surveys

2. Conduct training on Pharmaceutical Management of TB for district TB coordinators (Georgia only)

The three day workshop was attended by district TB coordinators, regional TB managers and persons responsible for managing medicines in treatment facilities. There were 19 participants in all. See Annex 2. The workshop included the following sessions and practical activities:

- **Session 1:** Introduction to TB Pharmaceutical Management

In practical sessions, participants identified who is responsible for the different elements of the Pharmaceutical Cycle in their districts.

- **Session 2: Quantification**

In small work groups participants practiced how to quantify TB drug needs using data from their TB programs; the morbidity method was used for the exercise and problems and results were discussed in plenary.

Use of consumption method for quantifying and ordering 1st- and 2nd- line drugs at the district level was discussed.

- **Session 3: Distribution**

In small groups, participants reviewed various inventory control tools provided by RPM Plus in their handouts and how these could be adapted for use in their respective treatment facilities.

Participants learned how to calculate average monthly consumption quantities for storage and treatment facilities to make ordering more precise.

- **Session 4: Quality Assurance**

In plenary the participants identified who is responsible for the different elements of the Georgian quality assurance system and brainstormed gaps and potential improvements.

- **Session 5: Monitoring Performance and Evaluating Impact**

Participants were introduced to pharmaceutical management indicators, how to calculate them and how they can be used by district managers for supervisory monitoring and by health center directors for self-monitoring.

- **Session 6: Developing Individual Improvement Plans**

In lieu of this activity and at the request of district managers, this session was substituted for a different practical exercise, specifically how to manage decentralization of TB medicines to polyclinics. This is a new program for the NTP since up until now all TB medicines were dispensed from TB clinics. During the practical exercise the pharmaceutical cycle elements were discussed one by one to determine the best way to distribute, order, account for, document and monitor use of TB drugs in the polyclinics. The majority of the issues were resolved, hence the plan to begin this new program by the end of July will likely take place on time.

3. **Brief/debrief USAID/Georgia officials, upon request**

Due to length of workshop activities each day it was not possible to brief USAID/Georgia in person; briefing will be done by email and through this report.

Participants responded to an evaluation questionnaire for this workshop. Overall results were quite good. See Annex 3 for more details about each session and accompanying practical work.

Collaborators and Partners

Dr. Archil Salakaia, NTP Manager, Georgia

Dr. Maia Kavtaradze, GOPA Georgia

Dr. Nino Mdivani, GFATM, Georgia

NEXT STEPS

- No future regional activities for the Caucasus countries have been planned
- Further technical assistance at the country level will be possible depending on requests by missions

Outcomes

1. Regional PMTB assessment workshop

As a result of the assessment experience and practical work during the workshops the following outcomes were realized. Country teams:

- are familiar with techniques for conducting program research in TB pharmaceutical management
- have incorporated many of the PMTB indicators into their normal supervisory visit checklists
- have evidence to present to NTP manager, Minister of Health, GFATM committees on problems with drug availability and use and how to improve them
- have prepared Power Point presentations with evidence ready to be presented
- have final assessment reports ready for dissemination to local and international TB partners to encourage support for improving gaps and weaknesses identified by the survey
- can use information and results of findings in future grant application writing such as to the Global Fund to Fight Aids, TB and Malaria, the Green Light Committee and the Global TB Drug Facility to describe their needs

2. Georgia District TB Coordinator's workshop

As a result of the Georgia Pharmaceutical Management Workshop, the following outcomes were realized for the district TB coordinators:

- now understand the critical elements of good TB pharmaceutical management
- have tools to improve inventory control management in the district TB treatment facilities
- better understand how TB drugs flow because of the practical exercise they undertook in developing a procedure for decentralizing drug use to the polyclinic level

ANNEX 1. PARTICIPANT LIST

MTB Assessment Follow-on Workshop

July 12-20

Tbilisi, Georgia

Armenia-NTP	Ms. GASPARYAN Nelly
Armenia-NTP	Dr. MAZKOSSIAN Laura
Armenia-GOPA	Dr. Hrayr Aslanyan - GOPA/EPOS Country Coordinator
Azerbaijan-NTP	Ms. ASADOVA Yegana
Azerbaijan-NTP	Dr. ALAMAEDOVA Svetlana
Azerbaijan-GOPA	Dr. GOZALOV Ogtay
Georgia-NTP	Ms. BICHASHVILI Eliso
Georgia-NTP	Dr. SIKHAZULIDZE, Rusudan
Georgia-GOPA	Dr. KAVTARADZE Maia

ANNEX 2. PARTICIPANT LIST

Pharmaceutical Management Course for District TB Coordinators June 21-23, 2006 Tbilisi, Georgia

1. Eliso Bichashvili, Central Pharmacy, NCTBLD
2. Gulnazi Losaberidze, Central Pharmacy, NCTBLD
3. Dali Vakhramishvili, Pharmacy Chief, Abastumani Hospital
4. Manana Gongadze, Regional TB Coordinator, Shida Kartli
5. Rusudan Aleksidze, Chief Nurse, Gori TB Dispensary
6. Nana Khuchua, Regional TB Coordinator, Kvemo Kartli
7. Nona Rikadze, Pharmacy Chief, Rustavi TB Dispensary
8. Tamar Imnadze, TB Hospital Batumi, Ajara
9. Chabuki Maglakvelidze, Regional TB Coordinator, Imereti-1
10. Sosa Kuchava, Regional TB Coordinator, Imereti-2
11. Zaza Dgebuadze, Regional TB Coordinator, Samegrelo
12. Guliko Gonashvili, Regional TB Coordinator, Kakheti
13. Ana Gochiashvili, Nurse, Gurjaani TB Dispensary
14. Malkhaz Davitashvili, Tbilisi TB Coordinator
15. Ketino Mshvenieradze, Regional TB Coordinator, Mtskheta-Mtianeti
16. Archil Salakaia, Director of TB Program
17. Maia Kartaradze, GOPA, TB Manager
18. Shalva Gamselidze, TB Coordinator, National Program
19. Nino Mdivani, GFATM, Tbilisi, Manager

ANNEX 3. PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

Pharmaceutical Management of Tuberculosis Workshop for District Coordinators June 21 – 23, 2006 Tbilisi, Georgia

Number of participants that filled out the evaluation form: 14

	Definition
5	Yes, absolutely
4	Yes, mostly
3	Yes, minimally
2	No, left some doubts
1	No, need much more

I. Sessions scores:

Session 1: Introduction:	
Background and introduction of the subject	4.14
Group Activity Session 1: Participants analyze and discuss problems with TB pharmaceutical management in their programs	3.78
Session 2: Quantification:	
Participants understand concepts and practical tools for quantification of TB pharmaceuticals and supplies	4.42
Group Activity Session 2: Practice quantification of anti-TB pharmaceuticals and supplies, morbidity method	4.21
Session 3: Distribution:	
Issues and alternatives for distributing pharmaceuticals and supplies	4.15
Group Activity Session 3: Practice with average monthly consumption and check lists to analyze distribution management cycle	3.92
Session 4: Quality Assurance:	
Strategies to assure quality of TB pharmaceuticals	4.28
Group Activity Session 4: Exercise to describe quality assurance system in participants' programs	4.21
Session 5 Monitoring and Evaluation:	
Methods for monitoring performance of TB program and use of indicators for on-going monitoring	4.0
Group Activity Session 5: Selection of monitoring indicators	3.57
Special Group Activity Session: Designing TB drug distribution to PHC	4.0

II. General Evaluation

Question 1: The course had importance for my future professional responsibilities	4.71
Question 2: The course allowed me to better understand the concepts and use of tools to better perform my duties	4.38
Question 3: The course gave me the opportunity to exchange useful experiences with participants from other districts	4.42
Question 4: The theoretical content of the presentations was useful and sufficient	4.42
Question 5: The exercises and group activities were useful and sufficient	4.28
Question 6: There was a good mix of presentations, discussions and group activities	4.42
Question 7: The duration of the course was appropriate	4.42
Question 8: Which three activities or sessions were most useful for you, the first you list being the most useful	
Quantification 5	
Monitoring and evaluation 5	
Distribution 6	
Quality assurance – 6	
Introduction - 1	
Question 9: Which three activities or sessions were the least useful for you, the first you list being the least useful	
Monitoring and Evaluation - 1	
Quality Assurance -1	
Quantification - 2	
Question 10: What other subjects should have been included in this course	
More on Quality Assurance	
Experience of other countries	
Question 11: What suggestions do you have to improve this course	
Course is very good	
Nothing to improve	
More on local specifics	